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REMARKS

The Office Action of March 9, 2004 has been fully considered. Per the Office Action, claims 10 and 13 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. In the above amendment, accordingly, Applicants have incorporated the limitation of Claim 1 into Claim 10, included the limitation of Claim 13 into independent Claim 12, and canceled Claim 13. Applicants respectfully submit claims 1-12, and 14-20 of the present application are in condition for allowance.

Equally respectfully, Applicants would also like to invite the Examiner's attention to the fact that original Claim 1 is not anticipated by Sernetz (US 4,968,459).

Original Claim 1 states:

"A process for a making an arc tube, comprising the steps of:

sintering an arc tube composition to form an arc tube; and

annealing the arc tube in a vacuum, wherein said arc tube composition has an alumina content of about 99.99%, and wherein said alumina has a particle size up to about 10 μm ."

In the abstract of Sernetz, as the Examiner pointed out, "annealing the arc tube" is disclosed, but the abstract teaches that "the body is annealed in air". In comparison, the original Claim 1 of the present application claims "annealing the arc tube in a vacuum".

Moreover, Sernetz teaches away from "annealing the arc tube in a vacuum". Please see lines 16-22, Column 4 of Sernetz. The patent describes that "the results of this method are surprising in several respects because...no vacuum or reducing atmosphere...is required"

Applicants therefore respectfully request the Examiner to reconsider the allowability of the original claims 1-11.

The present amendment merely cancels claims, adapts the examiner's suggestions, removes issues for appeal, and therefore requires only a cursory review by the examiner. The claims as amended do not raise any issues with regard to new matter, do not present new issues requiring further search or consideration, and/or place the application in better condition for appeal. Accordingly, the amendment should be entered and the application forwarded to issuance. If a telephone call would expedite matters, the examiner is asked to call the undersigned.

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All formal and informal matters having been addressed, the application is in condition for allowance. Early notice to that effect is requested.

If any fee is due in conjunction with the filing of this response, Applicants authorize deduction of that fee from Deposit Account No. 06-0308.

Respectfully submitted,

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